/78 cont./

548 177 Consequences. The consequences that prostitution has brought to Guajiro society are various: The first and decisive one is the almost absolute wreck of the social organization due to the destruction of marriage, the mainstay of social life based on the purchase of a woman, who by this transaction becomes the private property of the man in the matrimonial sense. If she is unfaithful there arise the claim for compensation payment and the whole series of consequences which we have seen previously, all tending to preserve conjugal fidelity. On the woman's turning to prostitution, the legal norms which establish that marriage payment and the very constitution of the family become useless as it erases the essential character of the family: i.e., procreation. There is an end to the principle of the establishment of new social cells and fecundation takes second place. It is the biological satisfaction that is sought, not the procreation of children, a phenomenon which constitutes a grave social problem for, although many people accept contraceptives, others through ignorance or thoughtlessness on the part of the man do not use them, and the natural consequences of pregnancy are not long delayed. Then they have recourse to all the abortives they know [847] of empirically, using the herbs whose active qualities are claimed by the old women of the Sierra de Macuira, or those they have traditionally learned from their ancestors, or they ask the assistance of a woman practiced in these matters, who for a fee provokes the abortion by traumatic massage on the abdomen of the pregnant woman and keeps the secret.

848 Besides abortives, the Guajiro woman uses potions of herbs which sterilize her for a time, up to three years, without stopping menstruation, and others which interrupt the menstrual cycle for long periods with the result that her sexual relations do not lead to pregnancy. She even appeals to magic to get this result, for example, by drinking, while fasting, a potion made from mule's [237] excrement left to soak overnight and then decanted. They believe that as this animal is sterile so will the woman who imbibes the preparation.

[96 cont.]

832 witchcraft have "whispered" over them, that is, when they repeat over them a series of magic incantations which have the object of giving them the power to make a man, or men, love the owner [97] as she may desire, and especially her husband when it is the case of a married woman.

We have seen in previous paragraphs how the hair of a pubescent girl serves as a base for men to make magic charms which can be used against the girl. But the hair of such girls in different circumstances serves to attract men in general and causes a woman to be looked on with such deference by a man that he buys her to take as a wife at a good price. For this [826 reason the young Guajiro woman, especially those of the Sierra 302] de Jarara, keep their hair when it is cut. At times to make the action more effective and to obtain better and quicker results, [237] they place it under a patch of cow dung. The association of their hair with cow dung is founded on a socio-economic phenomenon which we might briefly clarify.

556 We have seen repeatedly that wealth in La Guajira is 583 calculated by the number of heads of livestock that an individ- 832 ual owns; and it can be observed how a wife in their social organization is obtained by purchase. When the buyer is a rich man he pays in heads of cattle or horses; when poor, in goats and sheep. Hence it is clear every woman aspires to be paid for in cows and in a greater number than those paid for other women, as this establishes an advance in her social status. This is the reason why she buries her hair under cow dung and not that of any other animal. She has made a very primitive association but [237] one that speaks for itself. It would appear that the magic attraction is brought about by the dung, and the results desired are increased if this is from the cow, the animal of most value in La Guajira.

826 In any case, young women are most careful about leaving their cut hair about where it could be picked up by another person, and for this reason they guard it all their lives, giving it in this way a sacred quality. This characteristic which we have called sacred stems from the magic connection established by the primitive between a person and the different parts of his body, to

[98 cont.]

It is very interesting at this point to emphasize the fact that these hunting charms, in both cases, take the shape of the excrement of the animal that is to be hunted. We cannot allow to pass unnoticed this constantly recurring presence of excrement in the matter of magic. Let us recall the fact which we have frequently mentioned that for certain umbilical illnesses in children they apply excrement; that to call up their protector spirits the shaman use talismans that are shaped like goat excrement; and young Guajiro women bury their hair underneath patches of cow dung in order that they may be bought for wives at a good price.

These phenomena make us think of a very important function of excrement in the Indians' belief in magic, a function that [99] we know about only in its external aspects, but its application does not surprise us even though its explanation still appears obscure.

One has to remember that the guano of birds, according to Guajiro myths, was what favored the spread of seeds and populated the country with nourishing and useful plants for man and beast. One of our informants recounted this part of the Creation in the following manner: "Then Mareiwa brought together all the zancalargas (wading birds), troupials, and doves in a flock. He pointed out the far distance and told them to go in search, and there they ate of the iwaráya (fruit of the cardon) and prickly pear. He ordered them to bring the fruit of the cherry trees, and Mareiwa made it rain throughout all La Guajira. Each dove went about spreading his droppings, and where these fell there sprang up all the plants which both the wayú (Indian) and their animals could eat. So were propogated the cardon and cherry trees, and the earth was sown...."

Charms for war. This charm has the virtue of giving its owner complete bodily immunity in the fights which frequently arise between the various family groups. For this reason, before getting ready for combat, when on the way and in fear of a surprise attack, or when he goes to present a claim for compensation payment in the case of the violent death of one of the members of his clan, the Indian will rub himself all over with